

Online Appendix for The Blue Wave: Assessing Political Advertising Trends and Democratic Advantages in 2018

In Tables A1 and A2, we show the total number of ads aired and money spent by different sponsors in House and Senate campaigns for the post-Labor Day period and in the final two weeks of the campaign.

We discuss the findings for the U.S. House directly in the paper, but is important to note here that ad volumes and cost vary a lot across sponsor categories. The majority of ads are sponsored by candidates, but outside group spending exceeds party spending.

We also noted in the paper that pro-Democratic spending in House races exceeded pro-Republican spending, but this was also true in U.S. Senate races. The ratio of Democratic to Republican airings in House races was 1.59 in the final two weeks of the campaign. It was lower in Senate races (1.38) but still significantly to the advantage of Democrats. Republican advertising was slightly more abundant than Democratic advertising in gubernatorial campaigns, but that advantage was much smaller than the Democratic one in congressional contests.

Table A3 shows the number of television ads aired in each House and Senate race, broken down by party sponsorship (Democratic or Republican) and ad tone (negative, contrast and positive). These data cover September 4, 2018, through Election Day and include ads aired by all sponsors (candidates, parties and groups).

In Figure A1, we replicate for U.S. Senate campaigns the time series of health care mentions. The rate of health care mentions for Democratic candidates was also much higher in 2018, but lower than for House campaigns. Republican Senate candidates in 2018 made reference to health care at a lower rate than in 2010, 2012, and 2014.

Finally, in Figures A2, A3, and A4, we reproduce the corresponding figures from the paper for U.S. House races, but use total airings instead of spending.

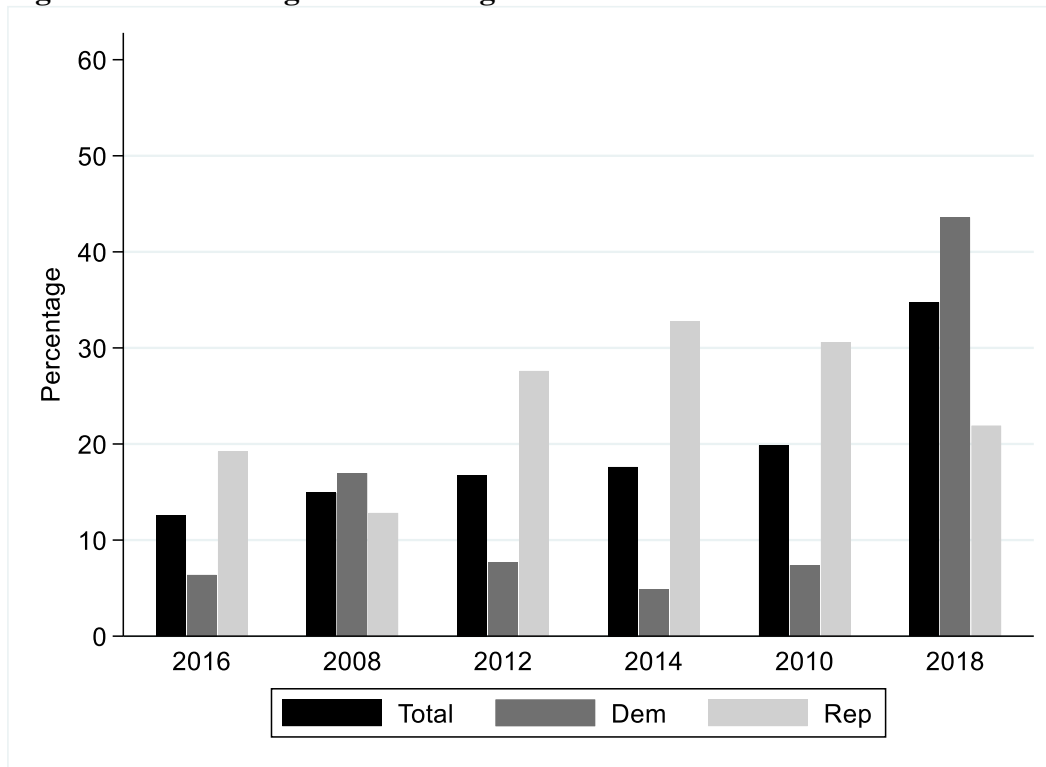
Table A1: Television Advertising in Final Two Weeks of Campaign

2018					Airings
	Dem		GOP		Dem:GOP
House	Airings	\$	Airings	\$	
Candidate	125,954	\$49,792,310	74,947	\$26,391,980	
Party	16,948	\$9,842,100	16,198	\$10,416,830	
Coordinated	7,246	\$5,194,210	4,327	\$3,547,740	
Group	51,332	\$56,694,140	30,939	\$25,244,030	
<i>total</i>	<i>201,480</i>	<i>\$121,522,760</i>	<i>126,411</i>	<i>\$65,600,580</i>	1.59
Senate					
Candidate	83,149	\$32,831,540	53,931	\$23,744,340	
Party	11,851	\$7,627,830	2,567	\$1,223,220	
Coordinated	5,483	\$4,116,020	6,824	\$3,424,890	
Group	41,797	\$28,747,750	39,946	\$27,798,190	
<i>total</i>	<i>142,280</i>	<i>\$73,323,140</i>	<i>103,268</i>	<i>\$56,190,640</i>	1.38

Table A2: Television Advertising in Post-Labor Day

2018					Airings Dem:GOP
	Dem		GOP		
House	Airings	\$	Airings	\$	
Candidate	366,993	\$146,645,690	198,077	\$77,465,300	
Party	63,110	\$46,466,340	45,120	\$38,784,450	
Coordinated	33,535	\$27,325,860	10,946	9,360,490	
Group	96,988	\$98,961,140	88,669	\$76,604,820	
<i>total</i>	<i>560,626</i>	<i>\$319,399,030</i>	<i>342,812</i>	<i>\$202,215,060</i>	1.64
Senate					
Candidate	270,563	\$112,798,560	162,438	\$77,131,130	
Party	34,369	\$21,537,000	16,464	\$13,677,240	
Coordinated	13,106	\$12,606,100	18,747	\$14,344,590	
Group	130,174	\$91,755,020	115,220	\$93,724,480	
<i>total</i>	<i>448,212</i>	<i>\$238,696,680</i>	<i>312,869</i>	<i>\$198,877,440</i>	1.43

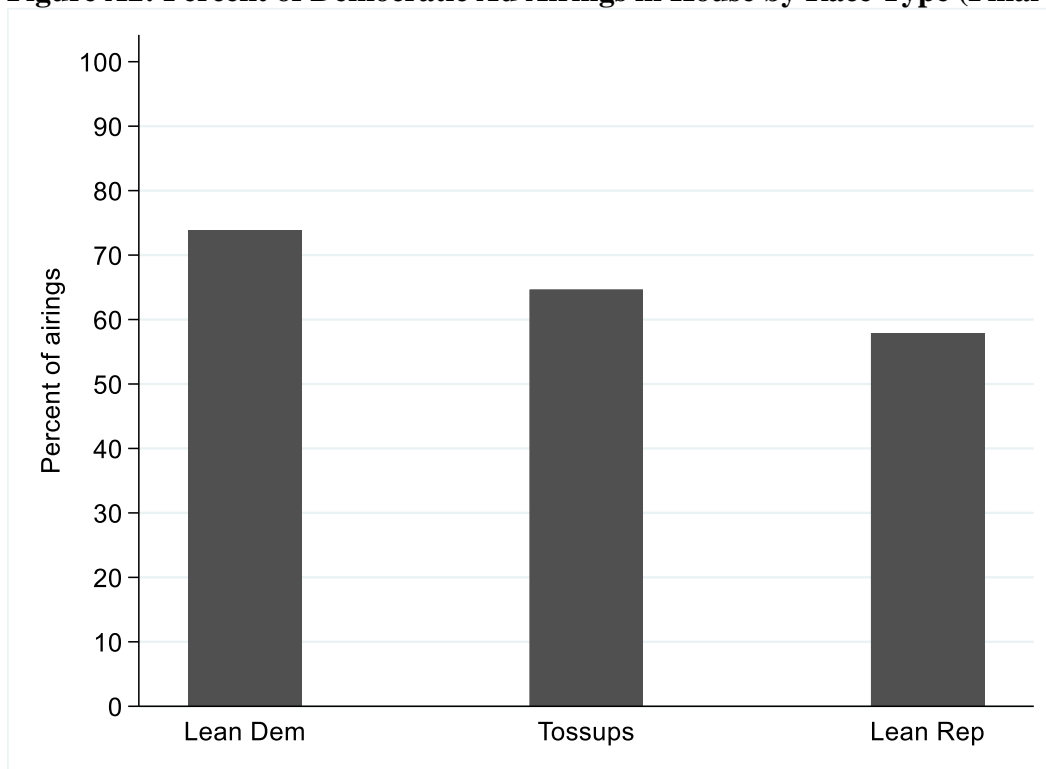
Figure A1: Percentage of Ad Airings in U.S. Senate Races that Mention Health Care



Source: Kantar/Media CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Note: Dem includes all ads benefitting Democratic candidates, and Rep includes all ads benefitting Republican candidates for U.S. Senate, including those sponsored by candidates, the party, coordinated airings between the candidate and party, and outside groups. Total includes pro-Democratic, pro-Republican and any third-party airings. Percentages are calculated by dividing the total number of ads mentioning health care or the ACA/Obamacare (as coded by the Wesleyan Media Project or Wisconsin Advertising Project) by the total number of ads for each type from September 4 to Election Day for each year.

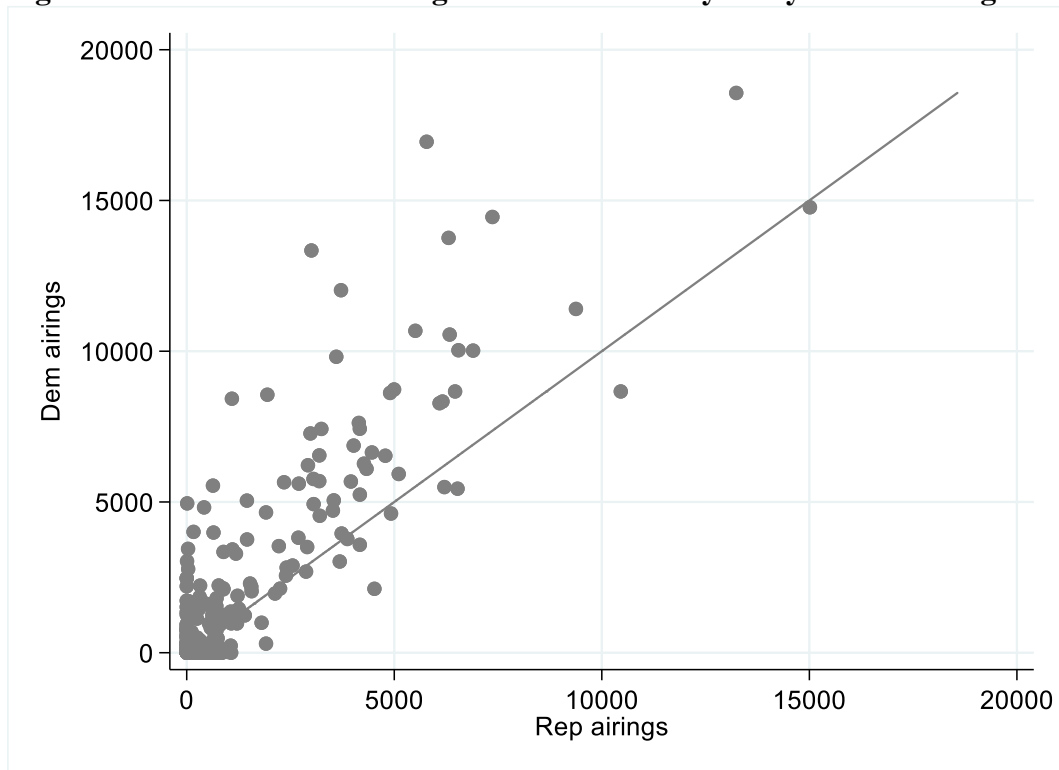
Figure A2: Percent of Democratic Ad Airings in House by Race Type (Final Two Weeks)



Source: Kantar/Media CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project for airings and Cook Political Report for competitiveness ratings.

Note: “Lean Dem” races are those deemed by the Cook Political Report as slightly favoring the Democrat, while “Lean Rep” races are those deemed to slightly favor the Republican candidate. “Tossups” do not favor either candidate. Ratings were issued on October 30, 2018. Spending data cover the final two weeks of the campaign (October 24 through November 6, 2018).

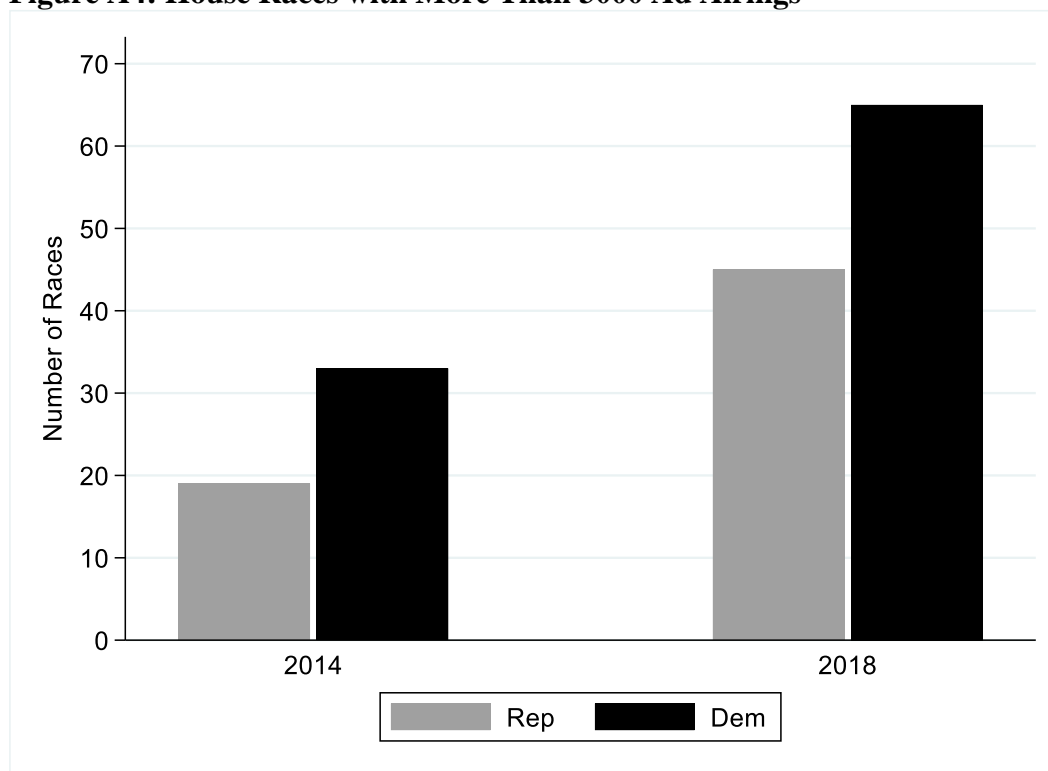
Figure A3: Television Ad Airings in House Races by Party of Benefitting Candidate



Source: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Note: Democratic airings include all ads benefitting Democratic candidates, and Republican airings include all ads benefitting Republican candidates, including those sponsored by candidates, the party, coordinated airings between the candidate and party, and outside groups from September 4 (the day after Labor Day) through Election Day 2018.

Figure A4: House Races with More Than 3000 Ad Airings



Source: Kantar/Media CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Note: Dem refers to the number of Democratic candidates and Rep refers to the number of Republican candidates who aired at least 3000 ads in each cycle during the post-Labor Day time period (September 2 through November 4, 2014, and September 4 through November 6, 2018).